

## THE SEA SONG.

There is no song unto the sea unknown,  
With wild and melodies and laughter low,  
Its happy ripples frolic to and fro,  
With passionate love-ly breaths in undertone,  
It woos the quiet night, with wailing moan,  
It soaks to clouded skies its tale of woe;  
With triumph song as o'er some vanquished foe,  
It passes on with foamy locks wind-blown.  
And dirges to the dying ear it brings,  
And requiems chanted soft of waves that weep,  
And strange dead marches, as with muted drums,  
It beats on lonely shores; and when night comes,  
A tender, crooning lullaby it sings,  
Rocking its own unto eternal sleep.  
—C. E. Killington.

## RALPH, THE ROVER.

"Here, Ralph! Ralph! Hi, you scamp! Come back here, sir! There, he's gone! Off for two or three days' tramp again. Beg pardon, sir! I didn't see you. I was that busy callin' the dog, I reckon I nearly walked over you. The matter, sir? Well, it's that dog, Ralph. You heard me call him, I dare say. A grander older fellow you couldn't find in a day's travel, but he has one bad habit. Most humans have more than that, and I ain't sure in my own mind that he ain't human."

"The habit? Well, it's just this: He will follow every blessed old tramp as passes here, and keep followin' 'em, sometimes for two or three days. He's a queer one. Did you notice him just now? Didn't see him? Well, he keeps just far enough behind the fellows so they won't drive him back, sniffin', sniffin' along, and kind of castin' his eye back to let me know he's hearing me, but not heedin' me. Just the same way he acts every time he goes off. He'll be back all right when he does come, and he's been acting that way ever since I've had him. 'Stolen? Why, sir, I don't believe the one's livin' could steal him or fasten him up ever so tight he couldn't get back ever since—an a right queer way I got him too."

"Is he mine? Well, yes, in one way; an then no, in another. It was a queer story anyway."

"Tell it, sir? Well, if I had time I might. Ah, thank you, sir! A fine gentleman like you can afford to be generous."

"Now, let me see! As near as I remember, it was June, two year ago, as I come down stairs rather early one morning to light the fire for my old woman. She wasn't very strong then; the youngster there was only a couple of months old, an I was gettin' the things all handy for her to get breakfast. When she come down the fire was lightin' an the kettle singin'—for joy of seein' her, I'm thinkin'."

"Mollie was always a great one for fresh air, so as soon as she saw that everything was goin' right in the kitchen she walks to the front door, turns the key an opens it."

"Well, quick as a flash she came runnin' back to me with her face kind of white an scared."

"Oh, Jim, come out here to the door! Quick! says she."

"An when I followed her blessed if I don't see the rummest sight I ever did, an there I stood, starin like an ape."

"You see, these seats on the porch are rather comfortable to sit on, an with the vines hangin over this way makes it most as shut in an quietlike as a bedroom; then the posts here an at the corners form good rests for the back. Well, anyhow, good or bad, right here, a leanin' back in the most uncomfortable way, was the trampiest looking tramp I ever saw, sound asleep. An on the seat beside him, with his head on the man's lap, was the dearest setter I ever expect to see. A vallyble dog, sir, too, as I knew soon as I set eyes on him. I always know a good dog, being rather in the sportin line myself, an this was a genuine Gordon setter."

"Well, sir, I suppose I must have said something, with surprise, for to wake them up. The dog turned the solemnest eyes round to me, askin me not to make so much noise; an the man, all rags an tatters, yawned an set up. An then, seein Mollie right behind me, I'll be shot, sir, if he didn't stand up, take off his piece of a hat to her, an begin to apologize for settin on our doorstep. Said he'd been overcome with fate! My eye! For the manners of him I could hardly believe he weren't a swell cove, dressed in the latest fashion, with a full blooded stepper at the gate waitin for him."

"I know I must have stared at him considerable, but, bless you, Mollie didn't spend no time a starin fill she'd asked him into the kitchen, an when the breakfast was ready she gave him an his dog, too, a good one."

"His feet were blistered with walkin in shoes that left half of his feet out doors an half in; an as he could scarcely take a step we made him stay with us a day or so till they got better; but he couldn't bear it, an the only reason, I think, was that he was afraid of burdenin us. But, Lord! He did as much for us as we did for him, I'll be bound. He filled the yard with kindlin's, an I believe he'd 'a' chopped all the wood in the village if Mollie hadn't seen his hands all blistered an bledin. That gave him away, sure. 'A gentleman born,' says I to myself when I see those hands."

"Then nothin would do but Mollie must doctor an bandage them up for him. An while she was doin it she heard a sound like a child tryin not to cry, an she just bends down an kisses her hand, an then he says, kind of low an choked, like, more like a groan than words, 'Oh, mother!'"

"An the way the little kid took to him was a caution. A mite like he was—no sense at all; only puckerin up his face an cried when I went near him. He'd smile up in Robert's face (that was what he told us to call him) an hold on to his finger like he was his nurse."

"Now, to be sure, sir, three days don't seem much in a life, an you'll maybe think it foolish the store was set by both man an dog before that time was passed."

Ralph would lay down beside the baby's cradle, an nothin would move him till his master left the room; then he'd get up an shake himself, as if it was time to go, an he was goin'."

"Mollie said he was human, an if ever a soul gets into an animal's body—I hear there's folks as thinks so—there was a good soul inside of Ralph."

"Yes, we all liked Ralph, an Robert even more. The fact is he was a real gentleman, that was plain enough, brought down as low as he was by Lord only knows what. But a true gentleman, an I know the right kind when I see them. He never let on for one moment, though, a single word about himself but once an that was the last evenin he was here."

"The dog was sittin beside him, with his head restin on Robert's knee, when I says, kind of suddenlike: 'I bet Ralph's a very vallyble dog, Robert.'"

"Yes, yes," he says, sort of slow. 'Too vallyble,' strokin Ralph's head with a lovin hand, while the dog looked at him with just as much love. 'Twas the humanest eyes you would ever see, sir."

"He's worth a great deal of money," he said again, after a moment's thinkin. 'I am very sorry for it sometimes. I've been in many hard straits at times, an I've been afraid—aye, afraid of myself—that I'd be tempted to sell him. Not while I was myself, old fellow, you understand, but when I was the brute I sometimes am.'

"By George, sir, you wouldn't believe it, I dare say, but I'd take my affidavit that dog looked up, sort of sadlike, and shook his head."

"To make the story short—though, all told, it was not so very long—when we came down stairs the next morning Ralph lay on the floor guardin his master's stick, but his master wasn't nowhere round."

"Tell me the dog didn't know! He knew as well as we did why it was done; that the master he loved an who loved him had left him, but he had been told to watch the stick, an with the saddest eyes an droopin he lay there all day long. An I truly believe if we hadn't got the stick away from him and burned it he'd 'a' been watchin it yet."

"An his master? Yes, sir; gone—clean gone. An we've never heard a word of him since. Ungrateful! No, sir, I don't take it so. I think he couldn't trust himself with the dog he loved, when he was himself, you see, an so he left him where he knew he'd be well taken care of. Yes, that's the way I see it anyhow. An then he got so far away before the dog would quit watchin that the scent was lost for poor Ralph. But he ain't never give up. Not a day, sir!"

"Do? Well, there's not a tramp comes past here—an the worse looking they are the wilder he is to get after them, sniffin at their tracks, and then his tail will drop so disappointedlike, yet he'll keep on an follow 'em for a day, or maybe three days, till he gets sure he ain't comin to his master, when he'll come back. Seems to me as if he kind of thought they might know him. How does he find out they don't? Bless you, sir, don't ask me, but dogs know a heap more than people think."

"He ought 'a' been named Rover, for he's been in more different places round here than I have an always turns up all right when he's settled the matter."

"Why! ain't that him now, a sniffin along the other road? Of course it is. Well, now, how'd he get over there, I wonder; seems as if he was scentin something, don't it?"

"Hi, Ralph! Ralph! Ah! there he comes, a boundin along towards us just as he used to go for his master. Looks as if he thought he could find him, sure. See, now! Ain't he a beauty?"

"Here, Ralph! Good old fellow! Come here, sir! Eh! What! Straight for you, sir, he's gone, without a look for me! All over you in a minute! A fine gentleman like you! What! you, you, sir! Robert! Great Scott! An Ralph knew you! Well, well; I give in. Dogs is human!"—M. Warren Hale in Pittsburg Bulletin.

**The Cyclone in Mauritius.**  
After 11 a. m. the velocity of the wind increased, being at 1 p. m. at the rate of 96.5 miles an hour, and at 1:30 at the rate of 104 miles. But from 1:35 to 2:30 p. m. there was a lull, the velocity decreasing to the rate of 43 miles an hour at 2:35 p. m. It then began to increase again, and at 3:47 p. m. was at the rate of 121.3 miles per hour, but it soon began to abate, being at the rate of 72 miles at 5:20 p. m., 60 miles at 6 p. m., 47 miles at 7 p. m. and 26 miles at 9 p. m. By this time the weather was fine, the sky partially clear, and here and there stars were shining brightly.

It may be stated also that from the 25th to the 28th there were from five to six groups of sun spots, indicating a considerable increase of solar activity, and that from the 28th to the 29th there were large magnetic disturbances, the portion of the sun's disk on which there was a very large group of spots on Feb. 13 being again on or near the sun's central meridian.—Nature.

**All Look Alike.**  
It is often difficult, when opinion is challenged, to know just what one is desired to say. Mahstick is a painter; he has a work on the easel, and he stands before it with a despairing clutch of his hair.

"What do you think of it? If you knew how I have struggled over it!"  
"Yes; it shows the struggle," endeavoring to put in the answer a sympathetic note.

"Do you think so? I don't think so at all," Mahstick replies with feeling, but then takes heart, and waving his hand at the works standing and hanging about him adds proudly:  
"Yes; they all show struggle!"—New York Evening Sun.

**An Eye for Effect.**  
Jinks—Why don't they make bicycle wheels with wooden spokes, the same as carriage wheels?  
Binks—Why, no one could tell which were the spokes and which were the legs.—New York Weekly.



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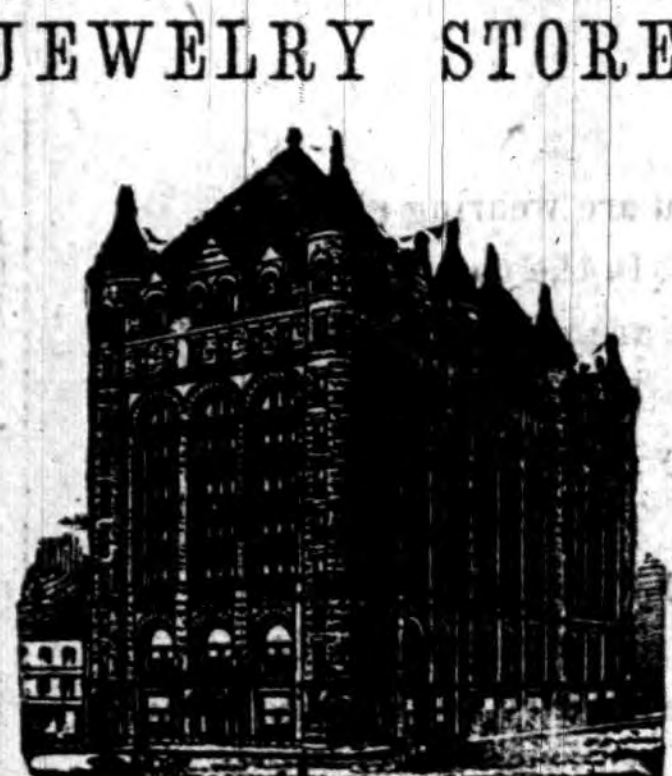
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